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# BAM blog

THURSDAY, MAY 11, 2017

## Exceeding Limits

By Susan Yung

*Cirkus Cirkör performs [Limits](#), a physical theater piece about confronting and soaring above boundaries, at the Howard Gilman Opera House from June 7—10. We spoke with Cirkus Cirkör artistic director Tilde Björfors and set designer Fanny Senocq about the piece.*

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[In Context: \*Silent Voices\*](#)[Silent Voices—Composers' Notes](#)



Anton Graaf in *Limits*. Photo: Mats Bäcker

Was there one moment or news event that inspired you to make *Limits*?

**Tilde Björfors, artistic director, Cirkus Cirkör:** When I read about the drownings near Lampedusa in 2013, it turned my life upside down and I needed to know more. We as members of EU guard our

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borders, and the consequence for thousands of migrants whose only chance to survive is a dangerous journey with life at stake. So I created *Borders*, the first of a trilogy on circus, risk, and migration. *Limits* is the second part.

In fall 2015, I tried to welcome displaced people in a spirit of common humanity. I was involved in establishing a transitional housing facility and opened my home to hundreds of boundary-crossers, every encounter a personal tragedy. I became aware of limitations within society and myself. Several times, I felt I couldn't take in any more; there was no room. But every time, a vulnerable soul showed me there was still hope. Suddenly there was room for more! Both our hearts and our brains have an innate capacity for growth.

It's shocking to watch Europe close borders when our circus has dedicated 20 years to pushing boundaries. The word "circus" is often used disparagingly, but I think the opposite is true—the world should practice more circus!

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Posted by Susan at 12:25 PM [No comments](#)

Labels: [Cirkus Cirkor](#), [Limits](#), [nouveau cirque](#), [physical theater](#)

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FRIDAY, MAY 5, 2017

## In Context: *Silent Voices*

*Silent Voices* tackles systemic injustice in soaring soprano-alto harmony, entrusting the vital issues of our day to its most astonishing young singers. This powerful multimedia concert features music by Toshi Reagon, Nico Muhly, DJ Spooky, Caroline Shaw, and others, and texts by Hilton Als, Claudia Rankine, and Pauli Murray. Context is everything, so get closer to the production through our series of curated links, videos, and articles. After you've attended the show, let us know what you thought by posting in the comments below and on social media using [#BYCSilentVoices](#).

- [2011 \(95\)](#)
- [2010 \(4\)](#)



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Posted by Chris at 3:53 PM [No comments](#)

Labels: Brooklyn Youth Chorus, Caroline Shaw, Claudia Rankine, DJ Spooky, Hilton Als, Nico Muhly, Pauli Murray, Shara Nova, Silent Voices, Toshi Reagon

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THURSDAY, MAY 4, 2017

## Behind the Scenes at BAM—Evan Kutcher: production, carpentry, and rigging



Evan Kutcher. Photo: David Hsieh

Shows at BAM come in all genres, medium, forms, and shapes. So our amazing stage crew is used to tackling any technical requirement, including building a set from scratch when the occasion arises.

Evan Kutcher, a production coordinator and the head of carpentry and rigging at the BAM Fisher since August, 2016, demonstrated his bona fide carpentry skills recently. When the team for *Poetry 2017*, produced by BAM Education, decided to transform the Fishman stage into a graffiti-splashed building

façade, Evan was happy to pick up his chainsaw and don a hard hat. The result speaks for itself, seen in these photos. We chat with Evan about how it all came about.

**Q: What does your job entail?**

**A:** I'm a production coordinator and the head of carpentry and rigging at the BAM Fisher. Rigging is the term we use when we hang things over somebody's head, whether it's lights, speakers, curtains, set pieces, or projectors. I'm the one who makes sure that that's safe and operated in the way it should be.

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Posted by Susan at 5:01 PM [1 comment](#)

Labels: [BAM Production](#), [behind the scenes](#), [design](#), [poetry](#), [Set Design](#), [tech](#), [technical theater](#)

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MONDAY, APRIL 24, 2017

## Faces in DanceAfrica



Janice Hart-Brathwaite, 2nd from left, with Charles Moore Dance Theater.

Photo courtesy of the artist

By David Hsieh

In February 1976, dancer/choreographer Charles Davis held three performances in the Lepercq Space in today's Peter Jay Sharp Building at BAM. He constructed an African village to honor the ancestry of

African-Americans. From there, a tradition and institution grew steadily. This year the [DanceAfrica Festival](#) celebrates its 40th anniversary (May 26—29). It is not only BAM's longest running program, but also has wide-ranging elements for everyone—performances (including for students during schooltime), classes, a bazaar, films, community events, scholarships, and a Memorial Room. All contribute to spread Baba Chuck's, and current Artistic Director Abdel R. Salaam's, enduring central messages: love, respect, and tradition. Here are stories from a few people whose lives have been touched by DanceAfrica.

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**William Mathews, "Baba Bill"***Council of Elders*

I met my future wife Mama Lynette [White] in 1981 and she invited me to an African dance class taught by Chuck. After a while sitting on the side, Chuck asked me to get up and dance with them. I was not a dancer and knew nothing about African dance. But his presence was so illuminating and his personality so inviting that I did as he said. After that, he said I was to come back next week, which I did. Some time after that, Lynette told me I was going to be on this "Council of Elders." Since I was courting her, I did as told. That's how I became involved with DanceAfrica. I remember asking Chuck once why he wanted me to be a member. He said, "Anyone that can make my premier dancer smile and look so happy is part of my family." The Council of Elders is an important part of the festival. We instill the sense of respect for tradition, culture, and elders in all participants. I oversee arranging the Memorial Room and have set up two mentorship programs (Crowns and Seeds) at Bed-Stuy Restoration. Chuck really makes you want to participate. He makes you feel loved, like you're in a family. I call it the magic of Chuck.

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Posted by Susan at 12:57 PM [2 comments](#)

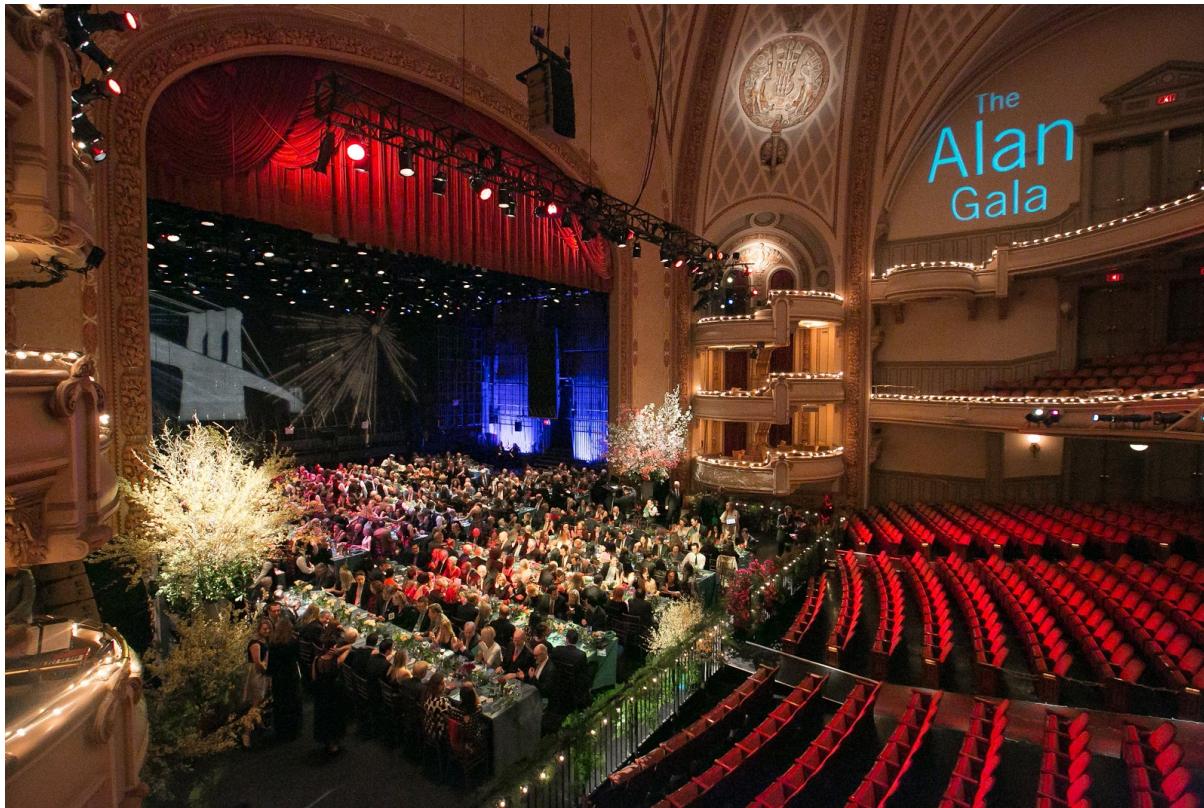
Labels: [BAM/Restoration DanceAfrica Emsemble](#), [Charles Moore Dance Company](#), [Chuck Davis](#), [DanceAfrica](#)

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 2017

## About the Other Night: The Alan Gala



The Howard Gilman Opera House transforms for The Alan Gala. Photo: Beowulf Sheehan

Brooklyn, New York—it's a helluva town!

On Tuesday, April 4th, we celebrated the incomparable legacy of our very own "no-holds-barred, take-it-to-the-limit Chairman" Emeritus, Alan H. Fishman. After nearly 30 years of service on BAM's Board of Trustees (14 of which he spent as chairman), the Brooklyn-bred Fishman **stepped down at the end of 2016**—leaving us no choice but to fête him in style.



Alan & Judith Fishman arrive. Photo: Elena Olivo

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Posted by Chris at 1:35 PM [1 comment](#)

Labels: [About Last Night](#), [Alan Fishman](#), [BAM Art Auction](#), [BAM visual art](#), [Fiona Shaw](#), [galas and parties](#), [Helga Davis](#), [Isabella Rossellini](#), [Mark Morris Dance Group](#), [Rufus Wainwright](#), [The Alan Gala](#)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 2017

## *Silent Voices*—Composers' Notes



In *Silent Voices*, the Brooklyn Youth Chorus will sing 10 commissioned songs by composers such as Toshi Reagon, Shara Nova, Nico Muhly, and DJ Spooky, giving powerful voice to the disenfranchised. Helga Davis hosts, writers Hilton Als (a recent Pulitzer Prize winner) and Claudia Rankine (2017 Guggenheim Fellow) contribute text, and the International Contemporary Ensemble will play as well. *Silent Voices* was conceived, and is conducted, by Dianne Berkun Menaker, and directed by Kristin Marting.

The following notes are by the composers, including some lyric excerpts:

so quietly

*Music by Caroline Shaw*

*Text by Caroline Shaw*

"so quietly" is an unfolding and an amplification of the voices of individuals who do not feel empowered to speak up, to contribute to a conversation, to perhaps point out an injustice or offer a solution. It could be a tendency to swallow words or backtrack when voicing an idea or opinion in a meeting, or a broader discomfort with engaging politically in society. This piece begins with text that is blurred, muted, and unsure of itself, eventually transforming into something focused, bright, strong, and joyfully outspoken.

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Posted by Susan at 10:53 AM [No comments](#)

Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [Brooklyn Youth Chorus](#), [Claudia Rankine](#), [DJ Spooky](#), [Hilton Als](#), [International Contemporary Ensemble](#), [music](#), [Nico Muhly](#), [Shara Nova](#), [Silent Voices](#), [Toshi Reagon](#)

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TUESDAY, APRIL 11, 2017

## Eat, Drink & Be Literary: Walter Mosley

For the past twelve winter spring seasons, audiences have shared a meal with some of today's leading contemporary authors in BAMcafé. Proudly presented by BAM and the [National Book Foundation](#), [Eat, Drink & Be Literary](#) features both long established and newer voices as they read from and reflect on their work to date. Each evening starts off with a seasonal, farm fresh dinner by Great Performances, wine from Seghesio Family Vineyards, and live music and features a reading, an interview, a Q&A, and a book signing with the featured author.

On February 21, the 13th season kicked off with Walter Mosley—author of more than 50 critically acclaimed books and the winner of numerous awards, including a Grammy and PEN America's Lifetime Achievement Award. His iconic *Easy Rawlins* detective series celebrated its 25th anniversary this year with the publication of *Charcoal Joe*. He spoke with Lorin Stein, editor of *The Paris Review*, about his illustrious career to date:

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While the series sells out quickly (though a few tickets for the remainder of the series were recently released—grab them fast!), we hope you'll stay tuned for highlights from the rest of this season's authors, which include [Ben Lerner](#), [Claudia Rankine](#), and [Elif Batuman](#).

Posted by Chris at 10:52 AM [No comments](#)

Labels: [BAM Humanities](#), [Eat Drink & Be Literary](#), [EDBL](#), [literary](#), [literature](#), [National Book Foundation](#), [Walter Mosley](#)

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MONDAY, APRIL 10, 2017

## DanceMotion USA—A Lucky 7



Yeman Brown of Reggie Wilson/Fist & Heel Group with a student in Santo Domingo, DR. Photo: Ariana Hellerman

By Sarah Horne

The seventh season of **DanceMotion USA<sup>SM</sup>** (DMUSA) has just been announced, with participating companies Bebe Miller Company, Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, and Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company. DMUSA, the US State Department's cultural diplomacy program that is produced by BAM, fosters mutual understanding, acceptance, and community engagement through dance and movement exchange. Season seven companies will continue this work with residencies in Colombia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Peru, Russia, and South Korea in early 2018.

By the end of 2017, this partnership between the **US State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs** and BAM will have sent 20 dance companies to 55 countries reaching more than 115,000 people directly in workshops and performances, and over 20 million people through digital platforms and social media.

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Posted by Susan at 3:14 PM [No comments](#)

Labels: [Bebe Miller Company](#), [dance](#), [DanceMotion USA](#), [Dayton Contemporary Dance Company](#), [DMUSA](#), [KEIGWIN + COMPANY](#), [Reggie Wilson](#), [Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company](#), [State Department](#), [Stephen Petronio](#)

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TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 2017

## Thank You, Alan Fishman



Judith and Alan Fishman address Merce Cunningham and company at a BAM gala in 2009. Photo: Elena Olivo

By Susan Yung

News flash: Brooklyn is riding a wave of popularity as a place to live, work, and play. BAM is central to this evolution both culturally and geographically, as it has been for much of its 156 years of existence. For the entire 21st century, Alan H. Fishman led the institution as chairman of the board until recently ceding the seat to Adam Max. During his tenure, attendance has grown to reach 700,000 visitors annually, and programming has blossomed in variety and reach. The Fisher building opened at 321 Ashland in 2012; its main performance space is named for Alan and Judith Fishman, and has drawn its own fan base for its intimate size and surprising versatility. Under Fishman's watch, Katy Clark succeeded Karen Brooks Hopkins as president, and the BAM Endowment has grown to nearly \$100,000,000.

Fishman was born and raised in Brooklyn. He attended Erasmus Hall in Flatbush, where he was a star and captain of the basketball team. While he has had an impressive career in the financial services industry, he has distinguished himself by supporting an astonishing number of Brooklyn's philanthropic and cultural endeavors, as well as organizations that encourage growth and reinvestment in the borough and its citizens.

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Posted by Susan at 12:15 PM [No comments](#)

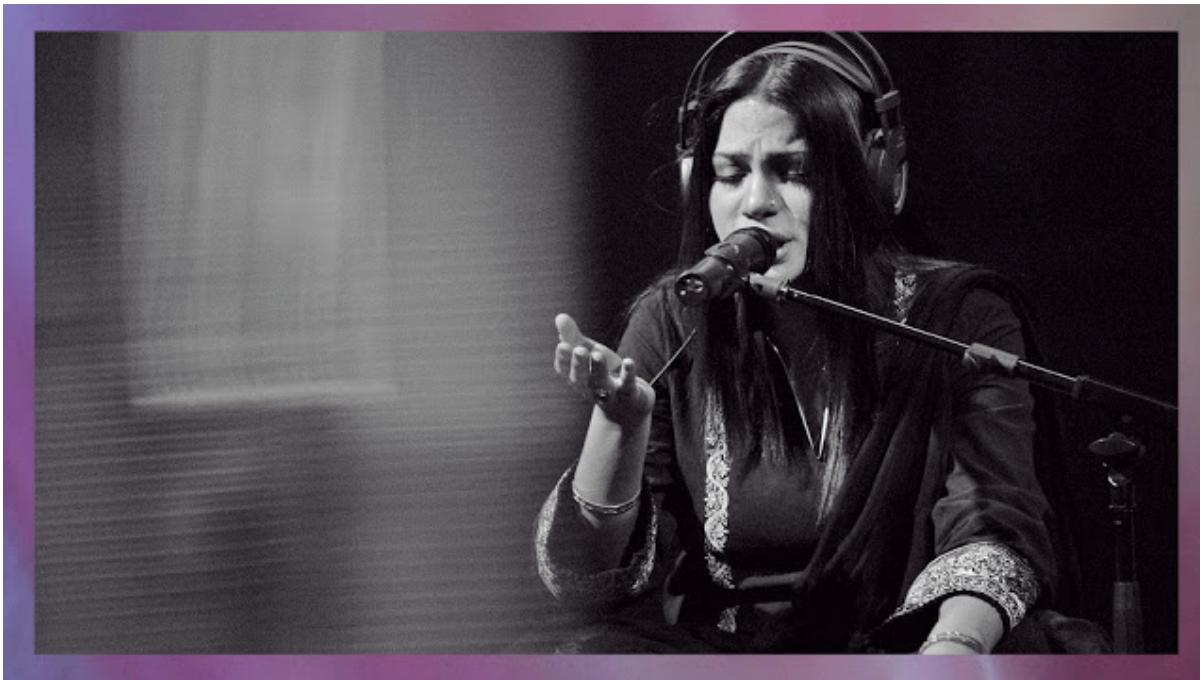
Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [Alan Fishman](#), [Judy Fishman](#), [The Alan Gala](#)

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MONDAY, APRIL 3, 2017

## In Context: Sanam Marvi

Pakistani superstar Sanam Marvi presents an evening of folk and Sufi devotional music at its most intensely sublime, singing poetic texts in Urdu, Sindhi, and Saraiki. Context is everything, so get closer to the production through our series of curated links, videos, and articles. After you've attended the



show, let us know what you thought by [posting in the comments below](#) and on social media using [#SanamMarvi](#).

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Posted by Chris at 5:38 PM [4 comments](#)

Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [music](#), [Pakistan](#), [Sanam Marvi](#), [Sufi music](#)

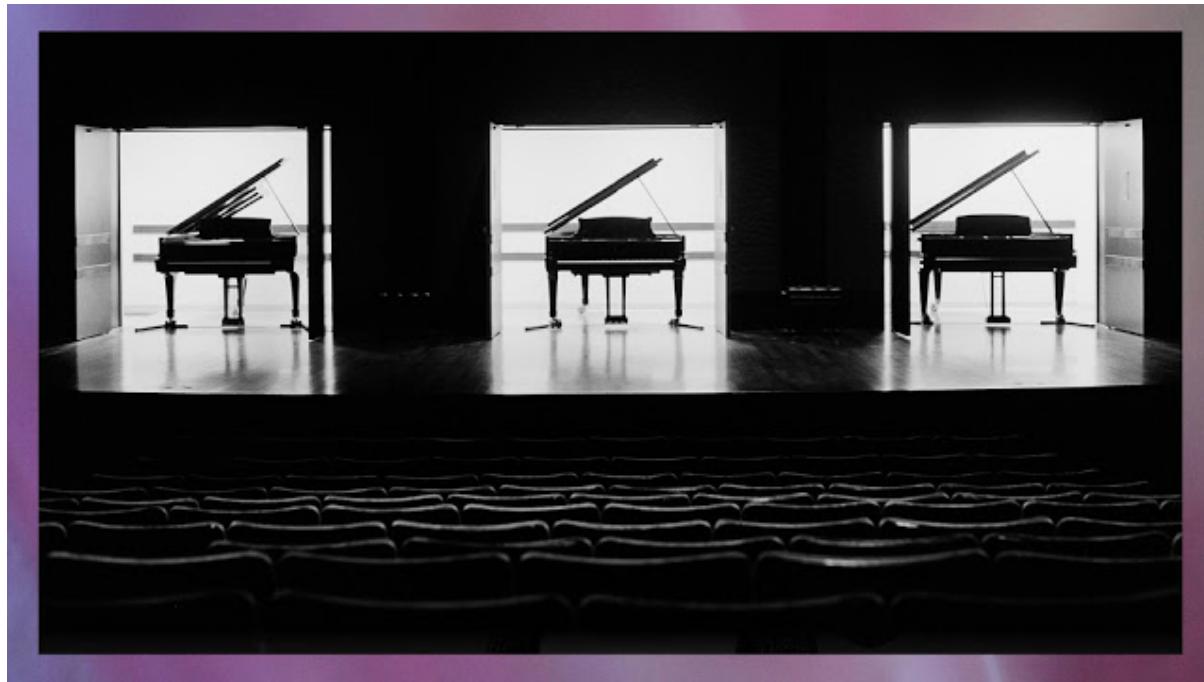
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THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 2017

## In Context: A Nonesuch Celebration

A stellar lineup of musical luminaries comes together for one night only to pay tribute to Bob Hurwitz,



who for the past three decades has served as the visionary architect of Nonesuch Records, affectionately known as "the label without labels." Context is everything, so get closer to the production through our series of curated links, videos, and articles. After you've attended the show, let us know what you thought by posting [in the comments below](#) and on social media using [#NonesuchBAM](#).

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Posted by Chris at 10:46 AM [3 comments](#)

Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [A Nonesuch Celebration](#), [Bob Hurwitz](#), [music](#), [Nonesuch](#), [Nonesuch Records](#)

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29, 2017

## A Galaxy of Stars



Caetano Veloso and Bob Hurwitz. Photo courtesy Nonesuch Records.

By Michael Hill

For 32 years, Robert Hurwitz not only served as president of Nonesuch Records, but also reinvented it from the ground up, along with his staff finding and nurturing the remarkably wide range of artists

who make up its roster. A Nonesuch Celebration on [April 1 at the Howard Gilman Opera House](#) is a tribute to him. At the center of the evening is *Twelve Pieces for Bob*, a program of world premiere works for piano by Nonesuch artists—John Adams, Laurie Anderson, Timo Andres, Louis Andriessen, Donnacha Dennehy, Philip Glass, Adam Guettel, Brad Mehldau, Pat Metheny, Randy Newman, Nico Muhly, and Steve Reich—performed by the composers and others. The evening also will include performances by Kronos Quartet, k.d. lang, Mandy Patinkin, Chris Thile, Caetano Veloso, Dawn Upshaw, Stephin Merritt, and others who have worked closely with Bob. Hurwitz, who has studied piano since childhood, has always kept an upright piano in his office, which he finds time to play each day. This program, then, is as much an acknowledgement of Bob Hurwitz the musician as the music lover, the A&R man, the record business visionary—and, to those on stage, a beloved friend.

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Posted by Susan at [4:11 PM](#) [No comments](#)

Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [A Nonesuch Celebration](#), [Bob Hurwitz](#), [music](#), [Nonesuch](#), [Nonesuch Records](#)

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MONDAY, MARCH 27, 2017

## We Love You, Trisha



Diane Madden, Tamara Riewe, and Laurel Tentindo in *Planes*, 2009. Photo: Stephanie Berger

The work of choreographer Trisha Brown (1936—2017) has been well-known at BAM for her large-scale proscenium productions such as *Set and Reset*, *Glacial Decoy*, and *Newark (Niweweorce)*, all of which included contributions by major artists and composers. But Brown's legacy at BAM began early in Harvey Lichtenstein's tenure, which started in 1967.

In 1968, going by Trisha Brown Schlichter, she performed *Planes* in an ambitious collective titled *Intermedia '68*. It included other notable performance artists such as Terry Riley, Remy Charlip, Carolee Schneeman, and Al Carmines, a key figure in the Judson Church Movement, of which Brown was a formative member. In *Planes*, dancers hung from, and moved between, holes in a wall, onto which was projected a film collage. It would be remounted at BAM in a 2009 repertory program.

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Posted by Susan at 4:21 PM [No comments](#)

Labels: [BAM Hamm Archives](#), [dance](#), [In Memoriam](#), [Trisha Brown](#), [Trisha Brown Dance Company](#)

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MONDAY, MARCH 27, 2017

## In Context: Doug Varone and Dancers



Choreographer Doug Varone presents three works—featuring scores by Philip Glass, Julia Wolfe, and Michael Gordon—representing the past, present, and future of his peerless company. Context is everything, so get closer to the production through our series of curated links, videos, and articles. After you've attended the show, let us know what you thought by [posting in the comments below](#) and on social media using [#DougVarone](#).

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Posted by Chris at 8:41 AM [3 comments](#)

Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [dance](#), [Doug Varone](#), [Doug Varone and Dancers](#)

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FRIDAY, MARCH 24, 2017

## *Silent Voices Ring Out*



Brooklyn Youth Chorus, 2014. Photo: Axel Dupeux for *Brooklyn Magazine*

By Robert Jackson Wood

If you are 15 years old and living in the United States, your life has been bookended by the unthinkable and the improbable. On one end is 9/11, whose cultural fallout—religious intolerance legitimized in the name of national security, for instance—you haven't known a day without. On the

other end is the recent election, which has only stoked those and other fanatical flames. There have been some good things in between: legalized gay marriage, for example. Yet as recent days have shown, progress is fragile. The pendulum has been yours to ride.

Luckily, though, tolerance is on the side of youth. In the Brooklyn Youth Chorus' latest project, *Silent Voices*, the performers—whose average age is 15—offer an evening of newly commissioned and other choral works dedicated to those disenfranchised by the events of late (and not so late). In essence, it is a cri de cœur for understanding and empowerment, sung by those who understand the flip side of post-9/11 paranoia, multiculturalism, more intuitively than anyone. To all of those hushed by the recent hate, *Silent Voices* simply says—we hear you.

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Posted by Susan at 4:58 PM [1 comment](#)

Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [Brooklyn Youth Chorus](#), [music](#), [Silent Voices](#)

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TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 2017

## Iconic Artist Talk: Robert Lepage

Tonight's conversation between Robert Lepage and Paul Holdengräber may be canceled thanks to Stella (the winter storm, not Kowalski), but you can still go behind-the-scenes with the visionary auteur thanks to archival footage from a 2013 BAM Iconic Artist talk. Peruse the clips below, and be sure to catch Lepage live in action in *887*—coming to the BAM Harvey Theater March 16–26.

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Posted by Chris at 1:51 PM [No comments](#)

Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [887](#), [BAM Humanities](#), [Ex Machina](#), [Pina Bausch](#), [Robert Lepage](#), [talks](#), [theter](#)

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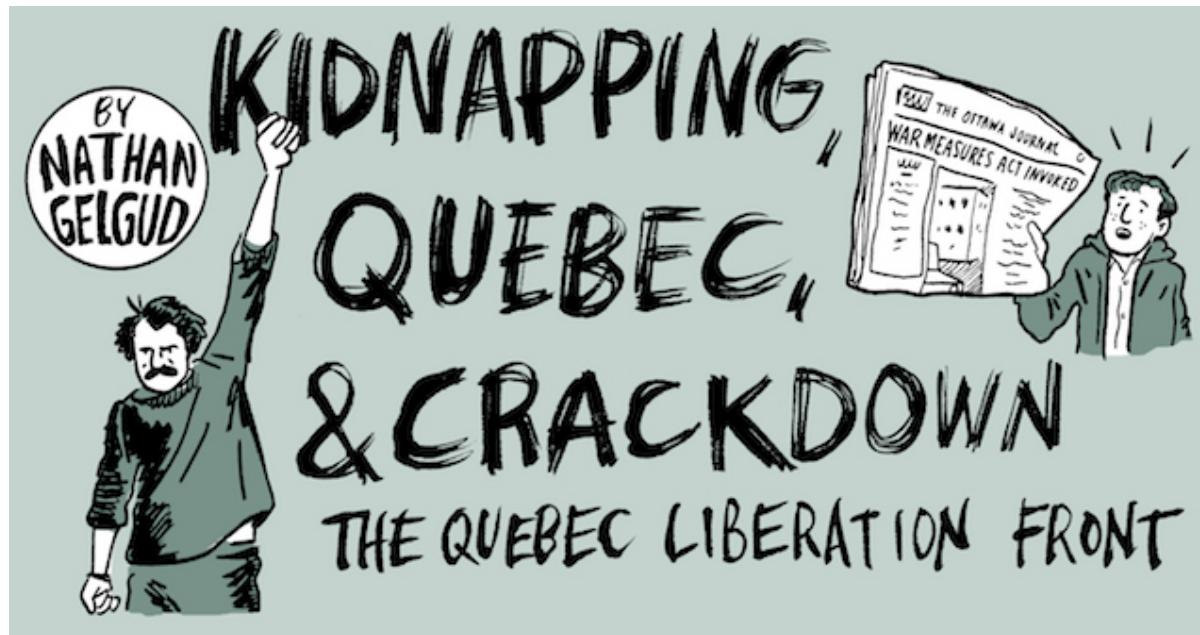
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MONDAY, MARCH 13, 2017

## The Quebec Liberation Front

Director and performer [Robert Lepage](#) has shown work everywhere from Japan to the Met Opera, but his roots are firmly in Quebec, Canada. In his intimate solo work [887](#) (Mar 16—26 at the BAM Harvey), Lepage delves into an adolescence shaped by a fraught time in Canadian political and social history. Illustrator [Nathan Gelgud](#) details the radical movement for Quebec liberation, the memories of

which Lepage explores in 887 through childlike wonder, technological wizardry and masterful storytelling.



THE FRONT DE LIBÉRATION DU QUÉBEC, OR THE F.L.Q., WAS A RADICAL SEPARATIST GROUP THAT SPLINTERED OFF FROM THE MAINSTREAM MOVEMENT FOR QUEBEC SOVEREIGNTY IN 1963.



THEY WERE MARXISTS AND SOCIALISTS WHO BELIEVED THAT FRENCH CANADIANS WERE AN EXPLOITED CLASS AND THAT QUEBEC NEEDED TO SEPARATE FROM THE REST OF CANADA AND FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT, A FRENCH-SPEAKING WORKER'S SOCIETY.

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Posted by BAM at 7:27 PM [No comments](#)

Labels: [887](#), [BAM Illustrated](#), [Nathan Gelgud](#), [Quebec Liberation Front](#)

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SUNDAY, MARCH 12, 2017

## In Context: 887



Renowned Quebec-born director Robert Lepage reconfigures spaces from his past and present in this deeply personal, tech-saturated solo work. Context is everything, so get closer to the production through our series of curated links, videos, and articles. After you've attended the show, let us know what you thought by [posting in the comments below](#) and on social media using [#ExMachina887](#).

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Posted by Chris at 9:54 PM [25 comments](#)

Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [887](#), [Canada](#), [Ex Machina](#), [October Crisis](#), [Robert Lepage](#), [theater](#)

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SUNDAY, MARCH 12, 2017

## In Context: *Mark Morris: Two Operas* *An evening of Britten and Purcell*



The choreographer presents a double-bill: Britten's *Curlew River*, featuring the MMDG Music Ensemble, and Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, featuring mezzo-soprano Stephanie Blythe and the Mark Morris Dance Group. Context is everything, so get closer to the production through our series of curated links, videos, and articles. After you've attended the show, let us know what you thought by [posting in the comments below](#) and on social media using [#MMDG](#).

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Posted by Chris at 9:08 PM [24 comments](#)

Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [Benjamin Britten](#), [Curlew River](#), [dance](#), [Dido and Aeneas](#), [Henry Purcell](#), [Mark Morris](#), [Mark Morris Dance Group](#), [opera](#), [Two Operas](#)

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FRIDAY, MARCH 10, 2017

## Sanam Marvi



Sanam Marvi. Photo: Jinsaar Kandhro

By Richard Gehr

Since its 2008 debut, the Pakistani version of India's popular *Coke Studio* TV show has helped popularize Sufi devotional music throughout South Asia. Along with rock and hip-hop, the show delivers a slick yet uncompromising blend of traditional songs in contemporary arrangements played on acoustic and electric instruments by the sort of youngish, long-haired studio virtuosos you might see in Los Angeles.

For her 2010 *Coke Studio* debut, [Sanam Marvi](#) sang "Manzil-e-Sufi" (The Sufi's Destination) by the mystic poet Sachal Sarmast (1739—1826), whose Sindhi verses described the great lengths the singer would go to in order to merge with the divine. "I'll become a yogi," she sang in her powerful voice, "an ascetic in pursuit of my beloved."

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Posted by Susan at 6:33 PM [No comments](#)

Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [music](#), [Sanam Marvi](#)

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 2017

## On Benjamin Britten's *Curlew River*

Choreographer Mark Morris, who has captivated audiences for over 35 years with his unwavering commitment to music, [returns to BAM March 15—19](#) with a career-spanning double bill that perfectly embodies his trademark blend of emotion and rhythm, movement and music. In the first act, the vocalists and orchestra of the MMDG Music Ensemble unite onstage to tell Benjamin Britten's haunting parable of maternal grief in *Curlew River*. Below, scholar Hugh Macdonald reviews the origins of Britten's stirring (and oft-overlooked) music-drama.



TMC Fellows perform *Curlew River* at Tanglewood. Photo: Hilary Scott

Dictionaries of opera all have an entry "Curlew River," but it is not really an opera. Britten called it a "parable," along with its two successors *The Burning Fiery Furnace* and *The Prodigal Son*. Designed for performance in church and not in the theater, these three works fall in the sequence of Britten's operas between *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Owen Wingrave*, and belong to an important phase in his life when he was re-thinking the issues of music theater and, more broadly, the direction of his style. All three are presented in a Christian context, and although the two later works are based on biblical stories, the origin of *Curlew River* lies far from the Christian tradition in which Britten was brought up.

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Posted by Chris at 4:28 PM [No comments](#)

Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [Benjamin Britten](#), [Curlew River](#), [dance](#), [Mark Morris](#), [Mark Morris Dance Group](#), [opera](#), [Two Operas](#)

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FRIDAY, MARCH 3, 2017

## Working with a Visionary—Harvey Lichtenstein

*Harvey Lichtenstein, who was president and executive producer at BAM from 1967 to 1999, recently passed away. Here are some memories from colleagues of the man who stoutly believed in Brooklyn, and whose actions would immeasurably transform and enrich both the borough's vibrancy and the world's cultural landscape.*



Harvey feeling the dancing with his heart, 1985 Photo (crop): J. Ross Baughman

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Posted by Susan at 3:07 PM [No comments](#)

Labels: [BAM](#), [BAM Hamm Archives](#), [BAM Harvey Theater](#), [BAM history](#), [Harvey Lichtenstein](#), [In Memoriam](#)

FRIDAY, MARCH 3, 2017

## Robert Lepage at BAM

by Joseph Bradshaw



Robert Lepage

From his upturning of *Wagner's Ring Cycle* at the Met to his reinvention of the hardboiled detective story in *Polygraph* (presented at 1990's Next Wave Festival), Robert Lepage can always be found at the forefront of theatrical innovation. Also an acclaimed film director, Lepage's work for the stage strikes an inventive balance between filmed and live action. His deep understanding of the potential of contemporary technology is used to reinterpret the past, and his results are always astonishing. What else would we expect from contemporary theater's foremost Renaissance man?

Since *Polygraph*, BAM has presented Lepage's stage work on the regular. For the 1992 Next Wave a 35-year-old Lepage—who by that point was already an established figure on the international scene—performed his triumphal one-man show *Needles and Opium*. This piece, which *Mel Gussow* called "a chamber work marked by its absolute precision," crosscut the lives of Miles Davis and Jean Cocteau

with elements of Lepage's own autobiography, in a gymnastic medley of musings on jazz, travel, Surrealism, and the act of creation itself.

[READ MORE >](#)

Posted by Joseph Bradshaw at 12:30 PM [No comments](#)

Labels: 2017 Winter Spring Season, 887, history, iconic artists, Lipsynch, Needles and Opium, Polygraph, Robert Lepage, The Blue Dragon, The Nightingale and Other Short Fables, The Seven Streams of the River Ota

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MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2017

## Doug Varone's Passions



*ReComposed*. Photo: Nikki Carrara

By Susan Yung

Doug Varone and Dancers performs three works at the [BAM Harvey from March 29 to April 1](#). Varone discussed the varied repertory and some sources of inspiration.

**Susan Yung:** Can you reflect on the fact that Doug Varone and Dancers is celebrating 30 years? And does the BAM repertory reflect that?

**Doug Varone:** I feel incredibly grateful for the opportunity and support to do what I do everyday for the past 30 years. With the creative successes also come the disappointments, and as a result I've learned the great virtue of patience both in and out of the studio. I think mostly about the great and dedicated artists that I've had the honor to work with and how they've each left an imprint on the dances that have been created. The "and Dancers" part of the company's name speaks to a family of artists and friends who have always allowed their passionate views to help shape the work and vision.

[READ MORE >](#)

Posted by Susan at 4:10 PM [No comments](#)

Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [dance](#), [Doug Varone](#), [Doug Varone and Dancers](#)

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2017

## *In Context: Teknopolis*

This luminous showcase of interactive technology features three floors of innovative installation pieces that bridge the arts and digital media. Learn more about the artists and the technology behind their works through our series of curated links, videos, and articles. After you've attended the exhibit, let us know what you thought by [posting in the comments below](#) and on social media using [#BAMTeknopolis](#).



[READ MORE >](#)

Posted by Chris at 6:10 PM [No comments](#)

Labels: [BAMkids](#), [technology](#), [Teknopolis](#)

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2017

## In Context: *Dreaming of Lions*

Malpaso Dance Company, the reigning standard-bearers of Cuban contemporary dance, find inspiration in Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*, with music by Arturo O'Farrill and the Afro Latin



Jazz Ensemble. Context is everything, so get closer to the production through our series of curated links, videos, and articles. After you've attended the show, let us know what you thought by posting in the comments below and on social media using [#MalpasoDance](#).

[READ MORE >](#)

Posted by Chris at 5:18 PM [5 comments](#)

Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [cuba](#), [dance](#), [Dreaming of Lions](#), [Malpaso Dance Company](#)

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2017

## [In Context: \*Dadan\* 2017](#)



Japan's preeminent taiko drum ensemble Kodo showcases the spectacular sonic possibilities of traditional time-honored instruments in this tightly choreographed pageant of percussion. Context is everything, so get closer to the production through our series of curated links, videos, and articles. After you've attended the show, let us know what you thought by [posting in the comments below](#) and on social media using [#DadanKodo](#).

[READ MORE >](#)

Posted by Chris at 12:57 PM [10 comments](#)

Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [Dadan](#), [dance](#), [drumming](#), [drums](#), [Kodo](#), [music](#), [Taiko](#)

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TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2017

## Rigorous Rhythm: Kaoru Watanabe on Taiko



Kaoru Watanabe, courtesy the artist's [website](#).

Drawing on the images, sounds, and techniques of ancient Japanese ritual, taiko drum ensemble Kodo melds rigor with grace in [Dadan, coming to the BAM Howard Gilman Opera House March 1—4](#). Led by artistic director Tamasaburo Bando, Kabuki theater giant and a national treasure of Japan, the troupe showcases its legendary drumming alongside virtuosic dance and instrumental performance.

To get a better sense of this athletic musical tradition, we sat down with Kaoru Watanabe—founder of the [Kaoru Watanabe Taiko Center](#) in Crown Heights. In 1997, after graduating from the Manhattan School of Music, Kaoru moved to Japan and joined Kodo—touring across the globe with the ensemble and even serving as one of its artistic directors from 2005—2007. It was, in the artist's words, "a truly transformative experience."

[READ MORE >](#)

Posted by Chris at 2:02 PM [1 comment](#)

Labels: [2015 Winter Spring Season](#), [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [Dadan](#), [dance](#), [Kaoru Watanabe](#), [Kodo One Earth Tour: Mystery](#), [music](#), [Taiko](#), [Tamasaburo Bando](#)

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TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2017

## A Moveable Hemingway



Photo: TM Rives

By Robert Jackson Wood

As inspiration for a dance work, Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* might seem strange. For much of the book, a fisherman sits nearly motionless in his skiff, waiting—for a fish to bite, for a fish to tire, for a fish to surface, for sharks to eat the fish. There is occasional shifting, knot-tying, and harpooning, but it's largely the fish that moves—an 18-foot marlin, hooked but tenacious, slowly pulling the boat out to sea.

The dance muse needn't be bound to movement, though. For Havana-based Malpaso Dance Company

—which based its forthcoming BAM commission, *Dreaming of Lions*, on the novel—there were the book's cultural resonances to consider. Hemingway was American, for example, but wrote the book during an extended stay at Finca Vigia, his Cuban home. The story is itself something of a Cuban-American amalgam, mixing the experiences of a real-life Cuban fisherman with Hemingway's own maritime exploits. Add in the book's themes—perseverance, loneliness, destiny—and its attraction becomes clear.

[READ MORE >](#)

Posted by Susan at 1:26 PM [No comments](#)

Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [dance](#), [Dreaming of Lions](#), [Malpaso Dance Company](#)

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2017

## The Life of a Kodo Apprentice



Ajara, Kodo. Photo: Takashi Okamoto

There's much to love about Kodo: the ritualistic precision, the subterranean sounds, the tensed, muscular bodies poised with impossible control. But beneath the surface of those displays lies an entire lifestyle devoted to a holistic folk ethos of which drumming is an integral part. Before a performer can officially join the group ([which comes to the BAM Howard Gilman Opera House March 1 —4](#)), they must be vetted through an intensive, two-year-long apprenticeship on Sado Island. As touched on in [our interview with former Kodo member Kaoru Watanabe](#), the daily routine of an apprentice involves drumming, dancing, singing, tea ceremony, woodworking, growing rice, and more...

[READ MORE >](#)

Posted by BAM at 10:57 AM [No comments](#)

Labels: [2015 Winter Spring Season](#), [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [Dadan](#), [dance](#), [Kodo](#), [Kodo One Earth Tour: Mystery](#), [music](#), [Taiko](#)

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2017

## Unsafe and Unwelcome: The Impossible Life of a Refugee

In *A Man of Good Hope*, the Olivier Award-winning Isango Ensemble takes up Jonny Steinberg's riveting book by the same name. Following a young Somali refugee who flees his country's civil war only to find himself in a new violent reality in South Africa, the production offers clear-eyed portrait of resilience amid the challenges of displacement. Here, illustrator **Nathan Gelgud** explores Asad Abdullahi's journey across Africa and beyond.



ASAD ABDULLAHI WAS A SOMALI  
REFUGEE IN CAPE TOWN. IN THE

TIN-CAN GHETTO OF BLIKKIESDORP.



BLIKKIESDORP WAS BUILT TO HOUSE CAPE TOWN'S EVICTED, 1600 IDENTICAL ONE-ROOM STRUCTURES.

HE'D BEEN ON THE RUN SINCE HE WAS EIGHT, WHEN HIS FATHER DISAPPEARED AND HIS MOTHER WAS KILLED IN FRONT OF HIM. CIVIL WAR HAD BROKEN OUT IN HIS HOMETOWN OF MOGADISHU, SOMALIA.



[READ MORE >](#)

Posted by Chris at 10:19 AM [No comments](#)

Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [A Man of Good Hope](#), [Isango Ensemble](#), [Jonny Steinberg](#), [music](#), [refugee crisis](#), [theater](#)

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2017

## Harvey's Road to BAM



Harvey Lichtenstein, 2nd from right, dancing with Bennington College Dance Group in 1953.

Photo: Lloyd Studio

Sixty-two years ago, Harvey Lichtenstein (1929—2017)—in his dancing debut at the Brooklyn Academy of Music—could not have guessed that he would eventually transform the institution into a modern paradigm for performing arts. In 1955, he was performing with modern dance group Mary Anthony and Company on a program of four works. His experience as a professional dancer was one of several threads of experience, in addition to working in marketing, fundraising, and arts administration, that he would draw upon in the years prior to 1967, when he took over at BAM.

[READ MORE >](#)

Posted by Susan at [4:26 PM](#) [1 comment](#)

Labels: [BAM](#), [Black Mountain College](#), [Harvey Lichtenstein](#), [Mary Anthony](#)

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2017

## Malpaso Dance Company Embraces Cultural Hybridity in Cuban Art



Malpaso Dance Company in *Dreaming of Lions*. Photo: TM Rives

By Carmela Muzio Dormani

Members of Malpaso Dance Company will perform its new piece *Dreaming of Lions* at the BAM Harvey Theater this March. Osnel Delgado Wamburg and Daileidis Carranza Gonzalez, formerly of Contemporánea de Cuba, the island nation's largest contemporary dance company, founded Malpaso with Fernando Saez in December 2012. Within two years of its founding, the company began touring internationally, pursuing collaborations with Brooklyn-based choreographer Ronald K. Brown and Cuban-American musician Arturo O'Farrill, among others. Several years later the company continues to successfully share a creative vision grounded in plurality and collaboration.

Delgado's choreography incorporates elements of Afro-Cuban rhythms and movements, Cuban ballet, and a strong tradition of modern dance movement. Malpaso's blending of various styles and influences builds on a long history of cultural hybridity and reflects the nuances of life and art in Cuba today. Malpaso's upcoming work with Brown—which references the Yoruba deity Eleguá—reflects the

company's ability to expand its reach internationally and its commitment to collaboration across physical and metaphoric boundaries.

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Posted by Susan at 1:35 PM [No comments](#)

Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [dance](#), [Dreaming of Lions](#), [Malpaso Dance Company](#)

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2017

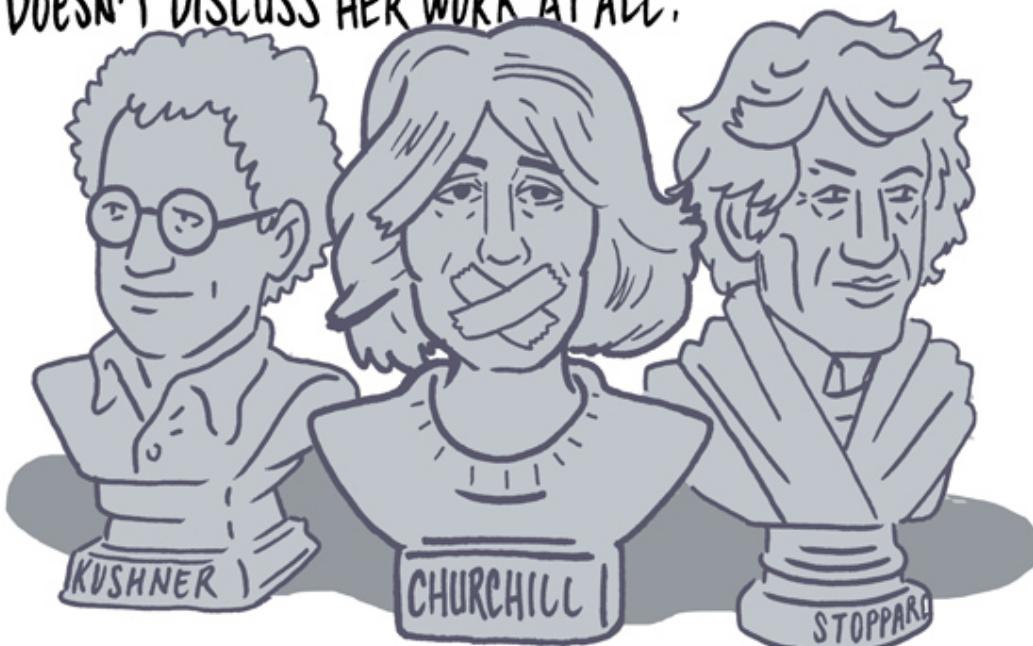
## Caryl Churchill—Beyond Boundaries

*Escaped Alone*, a new play by Caryl Churchill, comes to BAM February 15—26. Illustrator [Nathan Gelgud](#) explores Churchill's expansive career and body of work.



GAKYL CHURCHILL IS AMONG THE GREATEST PLAYWRIGHTS ALIVE.

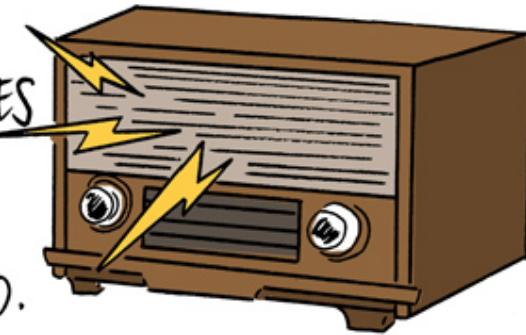
BUT UNLIKE HER TOP-TIER COLLEAGUES, SHE DOESN'T GET INTO THE ROLE OF PUBLIC FIGURE. IN FACT, SHE DOESN'T DISCUSS HER WORK AT ALL.



HER WORK PUSHES AT THE BOUNDARIES OF THEATER AND ITS CONVENTIONS. SAYS DIRECTOR DOMINIC COOK: "THERE AREN'T MANY THEATER ARTISTS WHOSE WORK GETS BOLDER, MORE UNUSUAL, AND MORE PROVOCATIVE AS THEY 'GET OLDER.'"

CHURCHILL STARTED OUT WRITING RADIO PLAYS IN LONDON

IN THE 1960s, A GOOD WAY FOR SOMEONE WHO'D PUSH BOUNDARIES TO GET STARTED, AS THERE AREN'T ANY FINANCIAL OR VISUAL LIMITATIONS WITH RADIO.



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Posted by BAM at 5:12 PM [No comments](#)

Labels: [BAM Illustrated](#), [Caryl Churchill](#), [Escaped Alone](#), [Nathan Gelgud](#)

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2017

## In Context: *Escaped Alone*

Playwright Caryl Churchill returns to BAM for the first time in 15 years with this by-turns hilarious and unsettling daydream directed by frequent collaborator James Macdonald. Context is everything, so get closer to the production through our series of curated links, videos, and articles. After you've attended the show, let us know what you thought by [posting in the comments below](#) and on social media using [#EscapedAlone](#).



[READ MORE >](#)

Posted by Chris at 4:43 PM [30 comments](#)

Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [Caryl Churchill](#), [Escaped Alone](#), [Royal Court Theatre](#), [theater](#)

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2017

## In Context: *A Man of Good Hope*

South Africa's Isango Ensemble delivers a riveting adaptation of a young Somali refugee's story, driven by the company's powerhouse vocals and signature marimba. Context is everything, so get



closer to the production through our series of curated links, videos, and articles. After you've attended the show, let us know what you thought by [posting in the comments below](#) and on social media using [#AManofGoodHope](#).

[READ MORE >](#)

Posted by Chris at 2:25 PM [7 comments](#)

Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [A Man of Good Hope](#), [Isango Ensemble](#), [Jonny Steinberg](#), [music](#), [Somalia](#), [South Africa](#), [theater](#)

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MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2017

## [Stephanie Blythe Sings Dido](#)



Mark Morris Dance Group in *Dido and Aeneas*. Tim Rummelhoff

By David Hsieh

"Opulent" and "majestic" are words frequently mentioned when people hear mezzo-soprano Stephanie Blythe sing. Since winning the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions in 1994, she has been at the peak of her trade on opera and concert stages. New York has been her artistic home base for 20-plus years. This March, she finally makes her debut at BAM in an iconic role—Purcell's Dido in [Mark Morris' Two Operas](#), which pairs *Dido and Aeneas* with Britten's rarely performed *Curlew River*. Here she talks about the role, Morris, and other musical favorites.

**David Hsieh: "Dido's Lament" is the most famous aria in the opera. Is it also your favorite passage?**

**Stephanie Blythe:** It is certainly one of them. It is probably the first aria that I ever heard. "Dido's Lament" is used as the premiere example of "ground bass," so it is part of every music history curriculum. The bass line is so evocative—it brings the performer and the audience along for the emotional ride, and it does so with so few notes. One of the things that makes it so special, and indeed the opera so special, is its economy. The story itself is very compact, and Purcell allows it to remain so—the arias and the ensembles are all distilled to their beautiful essence.

[READ MORE >](#)Posted by Susan at 2:39 PM [2 comments](#)Labels: [BAMbill](#), [Curlew River](#), [Dido and Aeneas](#), [Mark Morris](#), [Mark Morris Dance Group](#), [opera](#), [Stephanie Blythe](#)[Tweet](#) [G+1](#) [0](#)

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2017

## In Context: *RadioLoveFest*



For the fourth year running, BAM partners with WNYC to present a one-of-a-kind celebration of innovative radio, live on stage. Context is everything, so get closer to the production through our series of curated links, videos, and articles. After you've attended the show, let us know what you thought [by posting in the comments below](#) and on social media using [#RadioLoveFest](#).

[READ MORE >](#)Posted by Chris at 1:51 PM [21 comments](#)Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [ira glass](#), [RadioLoveFest](#), [Snap Judgement](#), [The Moth](#), [Wait Wait Don't Tell Me](#), [WNYC](#)[Tweet](#) [G+1](#) [0](#)

FRIDAY, JANUARY 27, 2017

## In Context: *Last Work*



The otherworldly dancers of Batsheva Dance Company return with the latest creation from choreographer Ohad Naharin. An open-ended meditation on the humanism inherent in the body's motion, *Last Work* veers explosively between the political and the excruciatingly personal. Context is everything, so get closer to the production through our series of curated links, videos, and articles. After you've attended the show, let us know what you thought by [posting in the comments below](#) and

on social media using [#Batsheva](#).

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Posted by Chris at 4:33 PM [19 comments](#)

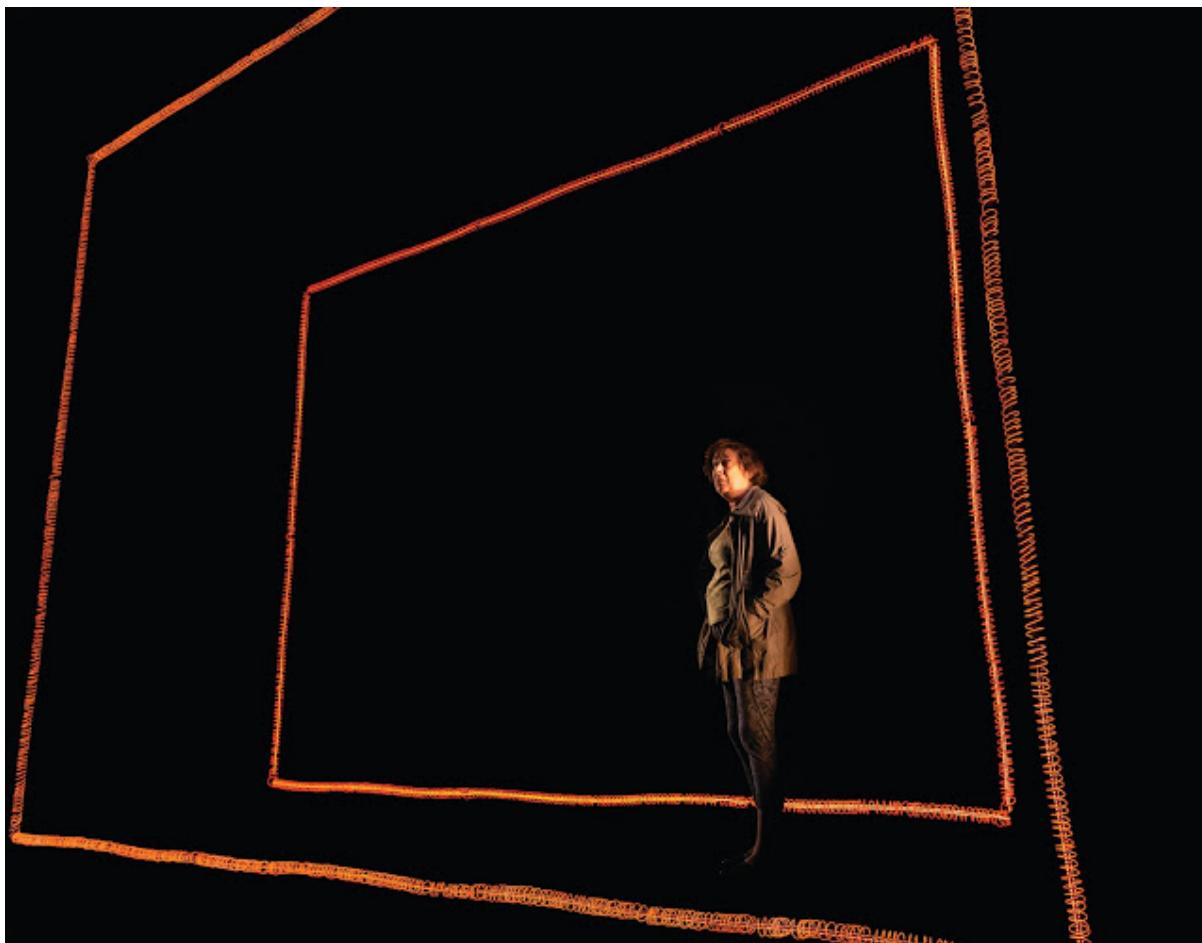
Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [Batsheva Dance Company](#), [dance](#), [Ohad Naharin](#)

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2017

## *Escaped Alone—Dark Imagination*



Linda Bassett. Photo: Johan Persson

By TOM MCHALE

"And I only am escaped alone to tell thee," a line from the Book of Job that Melville used to begin his epilogue to *Moby-Dick*, hovers questioningly over Caryl Churchill's new play *Escaped Alone*, which opened a year ago at London's Royal Court Theatre and [comes to BAM's Harvey Theater from February 15 to 26](#). Does Churchill's title refer to Mrs. Jarrett, played by Linda Bassett, who for roughly half the play's 50-minute running time stands in abstractly framed darkness downstage, coolly describing a series of ecological and social disasters that only she seems to have lived to tell about?

According to the play's director, James Macdonald, the title may also suggest a more general state of being and nothingness among a quartet of women, including Mrs. Jarrett, who are seen in the play's other half chatting amiably, if often at cross purposes, in a sunny backyard.

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Posted by Susan at 11:49 AM [No comments](#)

Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [Caryl Churchill](#), [Escaped Alone](#), [James Macdonald](#), [Royal Court Theatre](#), [theater](#)

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2017

## *The Man of Good Hope*

*In A Man of Good Hope, coming to the BAM Howard Gilman Opera House February 15–19, the Isango Ensemble takes up Jonny Steinberg's riveting book about a young Somali refugee who fled his country's civil war, only to find himself in a new violent reality in South Africa. A note from Steinberg follows.*



Photo: Keith Pattison

By Jonny Steinberg

I had little idea that I would write a book about Asad Abdullahi when I met him. I had in mind a very different project, one that would take in many times, people, and places. I imagined that Asad would occupy 10, perhaps 20 pages of the work.

It was at our second meeting, I think, that the book I actually wrote was conceived. Asad and I were walking through the Company's Garden, one of Cape Town's oldest and loveliest public spaces, when Asad picked up a twig, snapped it open and smelt it. I will never forget the expression that came over him—the surprise, the wistfulness, the knowledge that what he was experiencing would soon disappear. The fragrance had transported him more than two decades back in time. He was six or seven years old in a madrassa in Mogadishu, Somalia copying out the Koran line by line. The smell of

the twig had reminded him of the narcotic sap of the agreeg tree he had used to bind ink; he was reliving a forgotten high.

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Posted by Susan at 11:22 AM [No comments](#)

Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [A Man of Good Hope](#), [Isango Ensemble](#), [Jonny Steinberg](#), [music](#), [Somalia](#), [South Africa](#), [theater](#), [Young Vic](#)

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MONDAY, JANUARY 23, 2017

## Darrell McNeill, A Decade with BAMcafé Live



Darrell McNeill. Photo: Sally A. Foxen

By David Hsieh

*Darrell McNeill remembers the first time he walked into the Lepercq Space on the second floor of the BAM Peter Jay Sharp Building. "I came up, walked out of the elevator, turned a corner, and saw this ridiculously beautiful room—unobstructed space throughout, arched beams, glass pane windows. I said to myself, 'How wonderful it is to perform in this majestic room!'"*

*Fast forward to 2017. For 10 years he has been the programmer of [BAMcafé Live](#), which takes place in the Lepercq Space on selected weekend nights (official anniversary: December 4, 2016). He has brought in artists both established and up-and-coming, such as Marshall Crenshaw, Grady Tate, Kyp Malone, Graham Haynes, Hank & Cupcakes, Sasha Dobson, Jen Chapin, Gordon Chambers, Wyatt, Onaje Allen Gumbs, David Ryan Harris, Jay Rodriguez, Howard Fishman, Elliot Sharpe, Theo Bleckmann, Fred Ho, Sophia Ramos, Aabaraki, Joanna Teters, Blak Emojo, Model Decoy, Tamar-kali, Marcus Machado, Addi & Jacq, and others.*

To welcome the new season of BAMcafé Live, McNeill talks about his decade of programming live music acts.

[READ MORE >](#)

Posted by Susan at 2:25 PM [2 comments](#)

Labels: [BAMcafé](#), [BAMcafé Live](#), [Black Rock Coalition Orchestra](#), [Darrell McNeill](#)

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MONDAY, JANUARY 23, 2017

## A Very *Leenane* Glossary



There's some terminology in *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* that might sound a bit, well, foreign to your U.S. American ears. But fear not! We've compiled a list of vocabulary to help you navigate McDonagh's script with ease. No need to smutter—peruse this post a few times and you'll be ready for your next cèilidh in just a biteen.

[READ MORE >](#)Posted by Chris at 12:20 PM [No comments](#)Labels: [2017 Winter Spring Season](#), [Druid](#), [Garry Hynes](#), [Martin McDonagh](#), [The Beauty Queen of Leenane](#), [theater](#)[Tweet](#)  0

FRIDAY, JANUARY 13, 2017

## Martin McDonagh Weighs In

Illustrator [Nathan Gelgud](#) explores Irish playwright Martin McDonagh's thoughts on theater, music, literature, and more, drawing from interviews in [BOMB](#), [The Irish Times](#), [The New Yorker](#), and [The Guardian](#). See his pitch-black comedy, [The Beauty Queen of Leenane](#), at the BAM Harvey Theater through Feb 5.

# THE PLAYWRIGHT WEIGHS IN

BY NATHAN GELGUD



THE STRAIGHT-SHOOTING WRITER OF  
THE BEAUTY QUEEN OF LEENANE  
NEEDS LITTLE ENCOURAGEMENT TO SPEAK HIS MIND,  
SO JOIN US FOR **MARTIN M'DONAGH ON...**

[READ MORE >](#)

Posted by Nathan Gelgud at 3:58 PM [1 comment](#)

Labels: [BAM Illustrated](#), [Martin McDonagh](#), [Nathan Gelgud](#), [The Beauty Queen of Leenane](#)

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2017

## Frederick Douglass at BAM

*By 1860, Brooklyn had become the third largest city in America. As a thriving port city with significant trades in sugar, tobacco, and cotton, but also the location of Weeksville, one of the earliest settlements established by free slaves, Brooklyn's relationship to slavery is as complicated as the nation's as a whole. Throughout this period, the abolitionist Frederick Douglass came to speak against racial injustice. A new book, [Frederick Douglass in Brooklyn](#) by historian Theodore Hamm, recounts his traverse in the "City of Churches" with many original source materials, including excerpts of his speeches. Many of Douglass' messages resonate as much today as 150 years ago. And as part of this year's [Brooklyn Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.](#), BAM has invited the multi-talented performer Carl Hancock Rux (The Exalted, Next Wave 2015) to [read excerpts from the book, with Hamm providing commentary](#). Here, Hamm highlights Douglass' four visits to BAM, which has served as the nexus for public gatherings in Brooklyn.*

Frederick Douglass made four notable visits to BAM

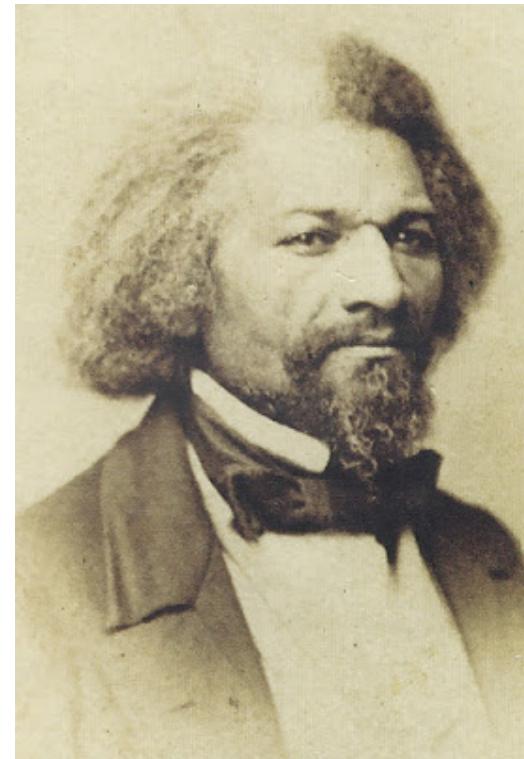
during the 1860s, its first decade of existence.

[Academy's first location](#), on Montague Street near what was then City Hall (and is now Borough Hall).

Douglass' first appearance—on Friday evening, May 15, 1863—was widely promoted, and also featured a performance by the Hutchinson Family Singers, a popular musical act of the era. Douglass delivered his speech "What Shall Be Done with the Negro?" to a packed house of 3000 people. As reported by Sydney Howard Gay (a key figure in the Underground Railroad) in the *New York Tribune*, "the beauty and fashion of the City of Churches were largely represented in the audience, with here and there a colored lady or a colored gentleman sitting in the audience," thus illustrating Douglass' call for racial equality.

"Can the white and colored people of this country," Douglass asked, "be blended into a common nationality, and enjoy together, in the same country, under the same flag, the inestimable blessings of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness? I answer most unhesitatingly, I believe they can." ([Read the](#)

[full transcript of Douglass' speech here.](#)) After his well-received speech, the Hutchinson Family closed the performance by leading the audience in a chorus of "John Brown's Body."



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Posted by BAM at 3:51 PM [No comments](#)

Labels: [BAM history](#), [Frederick Douglass](#), [Frederick Douglass in Brooklyn](#), [Theodore Hamm](#)

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2017

## Hope, Unwavering



Brooklyn Interdenominational Choir, 2016. Photo: Elena Olivo

By David Hsieh

There are years of triumphs and years of setbacks. There are years of prosperity and years of reckoning. There are years when the country is at war. There are years when the country seems lost.

But throughout the years, people have come to BAM to pay respect to a person who embodied integrity, perseverance, and an unwavering moral compass. They come to give thanks to a person who symbolized the stigmata they have borne and the spirit to rise above the worst human impulse. They come because they all share this man's dream that freedom will one day ring in all the land. They come to [pay tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr.](#)

[READ MORE >](#)

Posted by Susan at 1:04 PM [No comments](#)

Labels: [Black Lives Matter](#), [Brooklyn Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King](#), [civil rights](#), [Martin Luther King Jr](#)

TUESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2017

## Iconic Artist Talk: Declan Donnellan

On Wednesday, December 7, co-founder and joint artistic director of Cheek by Jowl Declan Donnellan joined Shakespeare scholar and Columbia professor James Shapiro for a conversation that reflected on Donnellan's more than 20-year history at BAM. This talk was part of BAM's Iconic Artist Talk series, which started during BAM's 150th Anniversary celebrations. The series uses archival footage and images from the BAM Hamm Archives as a jumping off point for discussion, allowing audiences insight into the range of an artist's work and relationship with BAM. Donnellan, who joins Peter Brook, Bill T. Jones, Laurie Anderson, and others in the rank of [BAM Iconic Artists](#), made his BAM debut in 1994 with his direction of *As You Like It*. Since then, he has returned with six Shakespeare works, including last season's *The Winter's Tale*, among other seminal theater productions. In this dynamic

conversation, Donnellan and Shapiro provided insight into six of Cheek by Jowl's iconic productions—*As You Like It* (1994), *Much Ado About Nothing* (1998), *Othello* (2004), *Cymbeline* (2007), *Macbeth* (2011), and *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (2012)—and reflected on some of the fundamental truths of directing, theater, and human experience in the process.

Posted by Chris at 11:43 AM [No comments](#)

Labels: [2016 Next Wave Festival](#), [cheek by jowl](#), [Declan Donnellan](#), [Shakespeare](#), [the winter's tale](#), [theater](#)

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FRIDAY, JANUARY 6, 2017

## In Context: *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*



Ireland's esteemed theater company Druid makes its BAM debut with this 20th anniversary revival of Martin McDonagh's Tony Award-winning pitch-black comedy and the first in a trilogy of plays set in the sodden Irish backwater of Leenane. Context is everything, so get closer to the production through our series of curated links, videos, and articles. After you've attended the show, let us know what you thought by posting in the comments below and on social media using [#BeautyQueenofLeenane](#).

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